



D U R H A M
Open Space & Trails Commission

ANNUAL REPORT

January 2012 to January 2013

Introduction

The Durham Open Space and Trails Commission (DOST) is an advisory commission charged with advising the City Council and the Board of Commissioners on matters relating to open space preservation and trail development while involving and educating all segments of the Durham Community. Additionally, the Commission has a mission to foster the wise use of Durham’s natural resources. The Commission consists of eight members appointed by both the City Council and Board of Commissioners, four elected or appointed officials, and up to 10 members appointed by the Commission. Current membership stands at 21 and includes the following individuals: Jeffery Bakalchuck, Glen Bowles, Adam Brakenbury, Kimberly Cook, Derwin DuBose, John Goebel, Anita Daniels-Kenny, Charles Welch, Robert Glenn, Artemas “Lee” Holden, JoEllen Mason, Annette Montgomery, Jason Nelson, Commissioner Ellen Reckhow, LaDawnna Summers (Vice Chair), Renolds Smith, David Smudski (Planning Commission) Thomas Stark, Will Wilson (Chair), Councilman Steve Schewel.

As an advisory board with reporting responsibility to both the City Council and the Board of Commissioners, the Commission pursues activities through regular monthly meetings of the full body of the DOST. These meetings are held the third Wednesday of every month at 7:00 pm in the Committee Room on the second floor of City Hall. To facilitate activities, the Commission has the following committees that meet on a monthly or as-needed basis: Trails, Matching Grants, Development Review, Community Education, Finance, Open Space, and Nominations. These committees bring forward issues and proposals for consideration and action by the DOST. This report summarizes and gives an overview of the activities of these committees where appropriate as well as the activities of the City of Durham and Durham County as they relate to the Durham Open Space and Trails Commission.

Trails Committee

The Trails Committee, in accordance with DOST, makes recommendations to the Durham Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the City–County Planning Department as well as elected bodies on trails and greenways, development priorities, new trails and greenway routes, and trail proposals prepared by design consultants.

The Trails Committee has overseen a number of projects this year.

The Third Fork Creek Trail (3.2 miles) between Southern Boundaries Park and Garrett Road Park and a connecting spur to Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway has been completed. The American Tobacco Trail is in the final stages of construction for the remaining last 4.4 miles including the bridge over I-40, known as Phase E.

The statewide Mountains-to-Sea Trail organization has worked with Durham Parks and Recreation Department (DPR) to construct a natural surface trail from West Point Park to River Forest Park along the north bank of the Eno River; that trail is a section of the longer Mountains to Sea Trail and is nearly complete. Several bridges will be completed on City Park property and the connections to Penny's Bend in the Eno, with this last phase of the trail in 2013. The Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail volunteers will have completed the 29 mile trail along Falls Lake between Durham and Wake County by fall of 2013. Funding, through our County matching grants program has been used to complete the construction of the bridge over a large tributary into Falls Lake. This bridge is completed and was dedicated in the spring of 2012. It eliminates a 7 mile on road detour. The City has negotiated an agreement with the North Carolina State Plant Conservation Program and the North Carolina Division of Agriculture for the remaining section to be completed and tied in with Penny's Bend in 2013.

The Duke Beltline which encircles downtown is potentially still available for purchase from Norfolk Southern although not at the price that the City had offered. Norfolk Southern may choose to enter into abandonment procedures of the Right of Way corridor for the Beltline, this year. The City has been actively pursuing the corridor in conjunction with NCDOT. Residual savings from the Third Fork Creek project were put back into the account in order to help round out the financing of the trail from the initial earmark of 1.2 million. This past year the staff and the Trails Committee worked extensively with Norfolk Southern, NCDOT and other departments to try and reach an agreement to purchase the belt line. This project is instrumental to our Downtown plan and our Trails plan. Staff, DOST and others continue to monitor the situation. Maps were prepared by the Commission to highlight this acquisition. The committee walked the beltline to determine its functionality. The Trails Committee continues to stay abreast of the issue and has made requests that the governing bodies continue to pursue the Duke Belt Line Trail as it provides for an excellent link to downtown and will serve as a major connector to neighborhoods and the active downtown re-development that is occurring. It is a top priority. If negotiations with Norfolk Southern fail, and if funds for the Beltline are still available for the purchase of RR corridors then it is requested that those available funds be considered for the purchase of the Panther Creek Trail in Eastern Durham or the Trent Street Spur. Both of those corridor sections will need to be evaluated as to whether or not they are actually available for purchase. The Commission also requests that the governing bodies continue to pursue the Timberlake corridor as it provides for an excellent link to development in downtown and open space in Northern Durham and could serve as a major multi modal connector.

To date, the completed sections of the North/South Greenway system (the top priority of the Master Plan) include a section of the American Tobacco Trail, Downtown Trail, South Ellerbe Creek Trail, Ellerbe Creek Trail, Stadium Drive Trail and Upper Warren Creek Trail, and the Third Fork Creek Trail (of which one phase is complete). The remaining uncompleted portions include the Lower Warren Creek Trail and a section of the Third Fork Creek Trail that runs roughly parallel to the ATT. Because of its proximity to the ATT corridor, that section of the

trail may take a lower priority. The site plans for the West Ellerbe Creek Trail sections have been submitted and approved and is waiting for funding for construction.

The completed and under- construction projects generally represent the complete expenditure of City bond funds, the primary source for trail construction, including about \$3.5 million from 1990 and \$4.1 million from 1996. The Durham Open Space and trails Commission have been good stewards in seeking additional funding via other sources, such as grants and the City has received generous support from various other sources for trail construction, including several million from the Transportation Efficiency Act (TEA-21) the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARFTF) Grant, and (in 2011), \$800,000 from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus funding. Those funds have all been expended. Durham needs to consider another bond referendum.

Members of the trails committee have worked with neighborhood groups to advocate for design funding for extensions of both the West Ellerbe and Pearsontown Trails. This funding was secured and placed in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Unfortunately, the new budget emphasis on a “fundable CIP” has meant that the Pearsontown Trail project has been removed from the CIP. The West Ellerbe Creek Project is under review. Members also promoted the cleanup of the trails surrounding the R. Kelly Bryant Bridge and they have constructed additional trail bridges (over Rocky Creek branches) throughout the neighborhood where needed. The new R. Kelly Bryant Bridge is up and a reconnection to the neighborhood has been made. A celebration was held to honor R. Kelly Bryant Jr. a long- serving and loyal member of DOST, a longtime trails advocate and a resident of the area in which the bridge is located and for whom the bridge is named.

Meetings to discuss the ATT bicycle and pedestrian bridge opening over I-40 (Phase E of the American Tobacco Trail) are in progress and it is anticipated that all construction will be completed in the fall of 2013.

The Trails Committee and DOST have been actively involved in the safety issues and concerns that have been raised recently on The American Tobacco Trail and will continue to be strong advocates working with other departments and divisions to create a safe situation for all users.

Geo-referencing of the city’s trails was completed when the City’s Emergency management staff accepted our data and mapping. This project involved applying thermoplastic mileage marks on the trails, geo-referencing them, and eventually uploading the data into 911 systems. This data have enabled first responders to quickly find trail users and provide points of reference for trail users and city staff. It was well used when safety issues arose. As part of this program, improved trail signage was designed and installed. Trail signage has become a priority for the trails committee and the Parks and Recreation Department. This data and additional enhanced geo referencing was then used in 2011-2012 to help facilitate an interactive mapping system for the trails committee to use, showing trail easements that have been acquired and those that need to be acquired.

The Trails Committee has applied for and received grants from the North Carolina State Parks Department of Parks and Recreation to print trail maps, and for trail construction in Campus

Hills and Sandy Creek Park. Sandy Creek Park continues to progress with numerous volunteers and the leadership of the trails committee, much has been accomplished in 2012.

The Committee continues to work with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission in producing the comprehensive map that reflects bike routes and hiking trails, park locations and trail heads. It has been published and has been extremely popular and is now in a 7th printing. We will continue to seek funding for that map. Revisions and reprinting were completed in 2012 with updates and Q-R codes on the back.

The Trails Committee selected six trails from the master plan that should receive priority in future land acquisition and construction funding. These trails are: The Duke Beltline, Third Fork Creek (extension), West Ellerbe Creek (extension), Pearson town Trail (extension) and Sandy Creek (extension), and Warren Creek (phase two). The committee created 'cut-sheets' which detail the location, future appearance and importance of each trail. These sheets have been completed and are used as hand-outs at festivals or at neighborhood meetings about trails.

The Adopt-A-Trail program was initiated by the Trails Committee in conjunction with DPR and has continued to draw interest with a number of trails being adopted by various groups, schools, and organizations. The Trails Committee would like to see trail maintenance improved on these trails and is working on various methods that would allow for greater citizen input. In addition, the Committee would like to see the continued acquisition and construction of trails throughout Durham. We recognize the need for additional funding. DOST plans to make a request for additional funding for trail design and construction on the next bond referendum proposal. The committee has been working with staff to allow and encourage trails that are built by the developer and this year we will accomplish that on a large project to the south.

The Trails Committee has formally requested that Council look at a trail maintenance funding source for the upcoming fiscal year and that there be monies set aside for future maintenance of the trails within our system. This request is very important for the future of the system and has been recognized as a need in our 2011 adopted trails plan.

The committee conducted the second set of trail clean-up outings in 2012. Trails cleaned in the past include, the Upper Warren Creek Trail, Sandy Creek Trail and the Riddle Road Spur. This year the Trails Committee focused on the Burton Park and Sandy Creek Trails and provided additional trail construction and clean up to the Mountains to Sea Trail and the Hollow Rock Park Site and Sandy Creek. The committee takes the opportunity to contact nearby neighborhoods to help with the cleaning, and to give some background on each of the trails at the beginning of each outing.

Sandy Creek Park and "Creek Week" in March continue to be big draws for the community. The trails committee has taken on the upgrading of some of the trails in Sandy Creek Park including maintenance on the existing bridge and construction of a bird blind within the park. They continue to focus on upgrades to the park that take a variety of forms, from improved access, and signage to wildlife viewing areas, butterfly gardens, and increased educational activities for the surrounding community. The park is beginning to be a real center piece for the

area because of all the hard work. We are hoping to make this a facility that is very accessible to handicapped individuals.

Additionally, they were instrumental in getting not only the recent Sandy Creek Bridge repaired but in the past, additional bridges built for the Burton Creek Trail on the south side of the R. Kelly Bryant Bridge and completing field work for the North East Central Durham initiative. All of these are important as our neighborhoods become more vibrant and neighborhood connections become more important.

They are continuing to focus on neighborhoods such as Sandy Creek and Campus Hills and are working with a grant applications for additional funding, focus on trails throughout the community. A Campus Hills nature trail and partnerships with Triangle Off Road Cyclist (TORC) for a field track in the Campus Hills area are still in progress and much needed bridge and deck work was completed in 2011 on site at the Campus Hills Park by volunteers and the trails committee.

In addition the trails committee is investigating possible ways to increase support for trail construction through the development review process. The committee has been working to create a process for trails that are built by the developer to public standards with public access. They accomplished that this year with our first larger project to the south.

Constructing trails requires patience and long range vision as a result of the slow parcel by parcel acquisition of trail corridors that is typically required as well as an often protracted contracting process. DOST feels that support for more funding, trail construction and acquisition should continue as a priority. Durham has 24.3 miles of paved trails; though after the ATT Phase E is completed there will be almost 29 miles.

Committee Goals for 2012 included: Overseeing implementation of better trails signage, meeting with trails groups in adjacent jurisdictions, keeping track of construction updates, working with the Finance Committee to promote funding for future trails, continue providing input to staff on community needs including reaching out to neighborhood groups, assisting with new trails maps, and more trail awareness-days.

Meeting place; date; and time: Committee Room, City Hall; typically second Tuesday of the month; 7:00 pm.

Members: Glen Bowles, Jeffery Bakalchuck, JoEllen Mason, Charlie Welch, John Goebel (chair)

Open Space Committee

Throughout the year the committee, in conjunction with staff, has been working on the Downtown Open Space Plan, the Urban Open Space, easements, usage and acquisition and a number of other environmental concerns and issues. The Committee brought forward several resolutions that raised environmental awareness about water and sewer, watershed concerns, and land use in on sensitive areas. The Urban Open Space Plan is in the Planning Department work program and is moving forward in the planning process along with the Downtown plan.

The committee has developed a list serve group concerning open space issues, which contains around 100 members, (as of March 2012).

The Committee has presented several resolutions for DOST's consideration concerning environmental concerns that relate to Triangle Transit's proposed crossing of the New Hope Creek Corridor. Additionally they have kept abreast of environmental concerns that relate to the watershed. They continue to follow various environmental issues throughout Durham keeping elected officials updated with their concerns.

The Open Space Committee has been continuing to refine the Open Space Criteria that is used to help assess properties for proposed County open space acquisitions.

The Committee has conducted several field visits for potential open space acquisition in the County and has been continually evaluating those properties so that valid determinations and recommendations can be made.

The Committee has been meeting on the third Wednesday of the Month.

Open Space Committee Members: Glen Bowles (Chair), Will Wilson, LaDawanna Summers, Bo Glenn, Renolds Smith-- Ad-Hoc members include Mike Shiflett, Frances Kerr, Emily Ander
Staff liaisons: Jane Korest, Helen Youngblood.

Farmland Protection. In 2012, the Durham Farmland Protection Board helped to spearhead a very successful new southern Durham farmers market. The market specifically has vendor slots allocated for Durham County farmers and some shared slots for new farmers who may not be ready for their own stall. The Farm Board was also active in UDO text amendments that would help make it easier to permit Farmers markets. In December 2012, they held a well attended "Farmer Appreciation Breakfast" in eastern Durham to provide an informal networking opportunity for local farmers. This breakfast was intended to be the first of a series in different locations in the county.

By the end of 2012, Durham County has permanently protected nine farms with conservation easements totaling 1760 acres, at a Durham County average cost of \$1,116 per acre. The County has another 520 acres on seven farms that have been awarded grant funds for conservation easements and are in progress.

To implement the adopted open space plans, the staff of the Durham County Division of Open Space and Real Estate continues to work with potential open space acquisition projects in the New Hope Creek, Little River and Eastern Durham Open Space Planning/watershed areas, in addition to providing support and technical advice to other programs and boards. This work includes involvement and work with the Open Space Committee of DOST and the Durham County Farmland Protection Board.

New Hope /Hollow Rock Preservation the Master Plan for the Hollow Rock Access Area was adopted in 2009/2010 by Durham County, the City of Durham, Chapel Hill, and Orange County, the four jurisdictions that participated in the purchase of the property. The Master Plan was developed with an advisory committee with several public input sessions. The Master Plan recommended the closure of Pickett Road, which splits the proposed park. The road is graveled and lightly used, so the advisory committee believed its closure would minimally impact the surrounding area while benefiting park safety. The potential road closure issue is complicated because the road closure would take place in Orange County, requiring action by the Orange County Commissioners, but the impact would be on Randolph Road residents within Durham County. In addition, Pickett Road is state maintained, so in order to close the road the Orange County BOCC first must request that NCDOT cease maintenance of the road, and NCDOT has to approve this request before the Orange County BOCC can legally close the right of way.

Two community meetings to gather public sentiment on the closure were held in June 2010, and May 2012. By the second meeting, neighbors on Randolph Road had become more vocal in their opposition to the closure, and in particular voiced that the closure should not take place until a light was installed at the Erwin and Randolph Rd intersection. Based on community input, the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) recommended in June 2012 to the Transportation Advisory Committee of the Durham Chapel Hill MPO that Pickett Road not be closed. After discussing the TCC recommendation, the TAC voted to table the item. This action realistically means that the Pickett Road closure should not move forward for the near future until conditions change. In December 2012, the NCDOT division had indicated that there is no current funding for the proposed traffic light, since there are other locations with more severe situations.

Park development of the Hollow Rock Access Area (which is located in both Orange and Durham Counties) has been limited by two issues -- safe parking is needed for the public, and Orange County does not have any capital projects funding until FY 2015-16 to use towards developing the proposed parking lot which will be located in Orange County. The property is already informally used by the public, so the lack of safe parking is a problem. Durham County has some funds in its capital projects to begin site development at this time. To address the lack of Orange County available funding, Durham staff has taken the lead on preparing a state trails grant application for \$200,000 which is due on January 31, 2013. This grant request has been reviewed and developed in collaboration with Orange County. The grant could pay for the majority of the parking lot and trail bridge costs, and help to move the project forward sooner than FY2015-16. The grant awards will be announced in Aug 2013. The Orange and Durham BOCC's would need to formalize the funding and management arrangements for this joint county effort once it is known whether state funds will be available.

Mountains to Sea Trail. In 2006, the Durham Board of County Commissioners approved a Memorandum of Agreement (Agreement) on the Mountains to Sea Trail with five agencies for the section of the Mountains to the Sea Trail that runs through Durham County on lands owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The partners to the Agreement are Durham County, the USACE, the State Trails Division of the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation ("NCDPR"), the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), and a statewide non-profit group, the Friends of the Mountains to the Sea Trail ("FMST"). In Durham County the proposed

trail runs through the Eno River State Park in the west, then through City-owned lands along West Point on the Eno Park, and East of 15-501 on City lands between West Point Park and the Falls Lake Reservoir lands and continues along the Eno River until the old Oxford Road area where the alignment would then run through land owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for Falls Lake. The Falls Lake section runs for approximately 29 miles all the way to the Durham/Wake County line.

At the present time, Durham County's role is limited to review and comment on trail design and construction. The State Trails Division staff of NCDPR has agreed to provide primary oversight for this volunteer-based trail construction. The DOST liaison is JoEllen Mason. Matching Grant funds were used to reconstruct a bridge over Lick Creek that eliminates the need for a seven mile detour. The bridge is finished and opened in May 2012. The FMST hopes to be finished building in Durham County by early 2013. Volunteer trail work days sponsored by FMST regularly attract fifty to one hundred participants and the Friends of Mountain to Sea Trail have been very successful at have large volunteer groups to help complete this project in our area.

Community Education and Outreach Committee

The Commission's mission to foster the wise use of Durham's natural resources along with acquisition of open spaces, greenway protection and trail development involves reaching out to the citizens of Durham. In order to achieve this goal, the Commission assists the City-County Planning Department highlighting current environmental and recreational issues, and meets face to face with the public at Earth Day, Center Fest, and Festival for the Eno River. The Commission appreciates the funds that the Board of Commissioners and City Council contributed to the budget to help achieve these educational objectives. The Earth Day booth rental fee was paid for through those funds. The remaining funds will be used to pay for the additional re- printing and upgrading of the very popular Durham Trails and Greenways Bike Hike maps. A few additional educational materials are often possible with the remaining funds. This year's remaining funds were encumbered by the Department for additional printing needs on the bike/hike map.

Throughout the year the committee has continued to enhance the DOST website. The Committee has done an outstanding job incorporating content into the website that explains DOST's goals and interests, and also informs the public about upcoming events and issues.

www.bikewalkdurham.org/dost

www.durhamost.org

Progress continues on orienting neighborhood organizations to the nearest trails and open spaces, with the hopes that meeting with these groups and talking up DOST activities those groups will become more involved with what is happening in their neighborhoods.

The Educational Committee would like to pursue more vigorously the use of various Web sites and educational outreach programs that schools or other organizations may be involved in that promote trails and greenways. In order to do this more effectively, the Commission needs funds

for some basic items for festival booth displays printings and presentation materials for enhancing public education.

The Community Education Committee staffs a Commission booth at the Earth Day Festival in April, the Eno River Festival in July, and Center Fest in September to inform the public about open space and trails programs, provide maps, and encourage community involvement. Previously the Trails Committee members created 5 maps of the top priority trails that they have had concerns about. Those trail maps were, printed and distributed to participants at all of those events. They are a big educational tool for the community and will continue to be updated. The Web site will continue to have a big presence and provide vital links to maps, other information.

The Committee meets monthly before the DOST commission meeting (third Wednesday of the month).

Committee goals for 2012 included: Maintain a presence at each of the local festivals, publishing news via our web site, improving the DOST website with maps and additional tools and links, improving community presence and public awareness of DOST, supporting the other committees by helping to publicize their work and bring visibility to them through the web site (i.e., Urban Open Space, Matching Grants program, etc)

Members: Lee Holden, Jeffery Bakalchuck, Jason Nelson (chair), John Goebel

Development Review Committee

The Development Review Committee of the Commission screened over 260 site plans and made recommendations/comments on approximately 24 zoning map changes that had impacts on areas of the Trails and Greenways Master Plan as well as the Durham Inventory of Important Natural Areas, Plants, and Wildlife. These cases were reviewed by the Committee and recommendations brought forward by elected officials which upheld Durham's long standing effort at protection of Natural Heritage sites and corridors.

With the adoption of the Unified Development Ordinance, a DOST member has been seated on the Development Review Board for 8 years. This has facilitated additional input into plans that have significant environmental/open space, inventory sites, and trails and greenways that are affected by development. The Development Review representative continues to monitor and make comments on plans before the Board. The Committee feels that reestablishing a local committee for review of inventory sites and changes to existing sites would be beneficial.

The Development Review Committee studies and makes advisory comments on zoning map changes and site plans for the Development Review Board, City Council, and Board of Commissioners regarding impacts to greenways and open space.

2012 committee goals were: 1. Continue to review site plans and re-zoning requests and make written reports as determined by the committee, and DOST. 2. Continue to represent DOST on development issues. 3. Seek additional input as needed on updates for adopted Inventory and work with developers to seek trails that are publically accessible but developer constructed.

Meeting place; date; and time: An ad Hoc Basis and, regularly Second Floor Committee Room City Hall, third Wednesday of the month, 6:00 – 7:00 pm.

Members: Annette Montgomery (chair), Adam Brakenbury, Anita Daniels-Kenney, Glen Bowles, David Smudski
Staff, Helen Youngblood

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee would like to meet several times in addition to the matching grants funding cycle to look at possible additional, non-public funding sources for trails and greenways. The Committee is considering how additional funding could be obtained from developers and/or the corporate community to facilitate trail construction.

The Committee has been instrumental in pulling together and researching our current financial situation on trails and greenways and continues to monitor how additional funding could be acquired through the Capital Improvement Project process. This group is also interested in long term financial maintenance of trails. The committee has been researching the costs of completed trails and their sources of funding and has continually followed budget constraints on trail funding sources.

This committee continues to reach out to Keep Durham Beautiful (KDB) in a joint effort to research and create a system for attracting private funds for public projects such as sponsorship of a trail or greenway, and to better coordinate volunteer activities for trail clean up days.

The committee also worked with the Planning Department and Parks and Recreation to provide an interactive data base map showing the acquisition status of segments of planned trails in the Master Plan. This serves as a useful tool to estimate acquisition costs required for the development of planned trails. In addition the committee would like to work more closely to better connect the Recreation Advisory Board with DOST.

The Committee meets monthly before the DOST commission meeting (third Wednesday of the month).

2012 committee goals were to: 1. Develop a database of past, current and future trail projects, 2. Investigate 501 c status or ability to collect contributions for trail funding from private sources, 3. Investigate potential funding strategies- CIP, bond referenda, impact fees, private contributions and to facilitate more neighborhood interaction with community trails.

Members: Annette Montgomery, Ellen Reckhow, Tom Stark, Glenn Bowles, Steve Schewel.

Matching Grants Committee – Conducts the application process and recommends awards to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) based on a set of criteria established by the Committee. Some previous projects have included tot lots, school playgrounds and open space acquisitions. The committee meets on an as-needed basis.

2012 Goals included: Annual review of criteria for any adjustments/corrections, continuing to increase opportunities to publicize the Matching Grants Program, lobbying County Commissioners to continue funding in their 2013 budget, reviewing and assessing applications, recommending selected recipients to DOST, delivering DOST approvals to BOCC for awards.

Members: Annette Montgomery, (Chair); Ellen Reckhow; Bo Glenn, Derwin Dubose

Staff: Bo Gattis, Durham County Budget Office

Durham County Matching Grants Program

Now in its twenty-second year, the Matching Grants Program continues to provide grants to community non-profit organizations for open space and recreation projects throughout the County. When budgetary feasible, Durham County contributes an annual allocation to support the Program. During the life of this Program, the County’s investment of \$1,258,625 has leveraged over \$3 million in monetary and in-kind contributions.

Durham County Matching Grants Program		
	Program to Date	Year 2013 (Cycle A)
Number of Grants	62	4
Value of County Matching Grants	\$1,258,625	\$ 29,350
Total Value of Projects	\$3,465,984	\$ 60,300

For the 2013 Grant Cycle, the Committee approved four new projects during application Cycle A. Details on the projects and award amounts are below:

Organization	Description	Grant Award
Creekside Elementary PTA	Installation of soccer goals	\$320.00
Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association	Various trail improvements at several sites including kiosks and removal of invasive plant species	\$11,530.00
Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail	Construction of bridge over stream at Riverforest Park	\$15,250.00
Lakewood Montessori PTA	Construction of community garden	\$2,250.00
TOTAL		\$29,350.00

County Commissioners approved \$77,175 in total Matching Grant funding for FY 12-13. The remaining \$47,825 will be available to be awarded during application Cycle B that will be finished during the 4th quarter of FY 12-13.

Overall Commission Goals for 2012

The Commission will continue to promote the preservation of valuable open spaces, the preservation of natural vegetation and stream valleys within the urban, suburban and rural environment, and the development of trails and other appropriate recreational and transportation facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.

In addition, the Commission will promote the protection of the natural environment where appropriate to serve the public interest, with equal consideration for long-term care of the environment and the short-term pressures of growth and continue to seek funding sources for additional trails and land acquisition. The Commission also feels that it is important to work with and reach out to other Commissions and agencies in order to reach common goals.

Commission Goals for 2012-2013

1. Continue to support the Urban Open Space Plan for the city, vital with our pace of growth for preservation of our open spaces and our environment (implementation of Comprehensive Plan policies 7.2.2.h and 10.1.3e).
2. Promote funding for *implementation* of the newly adopted 2011 update of the Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan including but not limited to; other grant proposals, open space acquisition and trail construction funds through a bond referendum and/or as an annual appropriation in the Capital Improvement Program. Existing funds have been expended for new trail construction.
3. Continue to promote the adopted Eastern Durham Open Space Plan in Eastern Durham and support City/County staff in the construction, completion, and management of the Mountains to Sea Trail. This proposed trail is an integral part of the Eastern Durham Open Space Plan and the “missing link” between Penny’s Bend and Wake County. This portion of the trail is a vital link to the Eno trail system, the proposed Falls Lake Initiative and eastern Durham.
4. Update the adopted New Hope Creek Master Plan.
5. Recommend that the Flat River Plan (Comprehensive Plan policy 7.2.2g) be made a high priority on the work program so that land acquisitions that are currently occurring in the northeast portions of the County can be incorporated into an adopted plan.
6. Seek out new funding sources such as grants, and corporate or other private-public partnerships that may help contribute to possible construction and or acquisition of open space and trails.
7. Continue to reach out to the Durham community through publication of maps, our web site presence, educational brochures, and participation in Earth Day, Festival for the Eno, Center Fest, and production of maps. Continue to reach out to the community and educate neighborhoods and others on our efforts including educational endeavors.

8. Advocate for open space and trails, express citizen concerns regarding open space and trails to Durham's governing boards, and communicate plans and programs to the general public.
9. Provide recommendations for zoning map changes/development and site plans to uphold the *Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan*, and pedestrian accessibility as well as the preservation of open space and respect for environmentally sensitive areas.
10. Continue to advocate for ongoing trail maintenance including the Adopt-a-Trail Program and quarterly work days.
11. Continue to facilitate the Durham County Matching Grants Program.
12. Promote the regional connectivity of trails, bike lanes, and sidewalks.

Attachments

(Appendix I. Durham Open Space and Trails Attendance).

Accomplishments List

Budget Request